

**LOWELL SCHOOL COMMITTEE**  
**Henry J. Mroz Administration Office**  
**155 Merrimack Street**  
**Lowell, Massachusetts 01852**

**Sokhary Chau**  
**Mayor and Chairperson**

**Tel: (978) 674-4324**  
**Fax: (978) 937-7609**

**Jackie Doherty**  
**Vice-Chairperson**

**Equity & Access**  
**Subcommittee Meeting**  
**Thursday, February 16, 2023**  
**City Hall – Council Chambers**  
**6:00 p.m.**

**Eileen Delrossi**  
**Dominik Lay**  
**Connie A. Martin**  
**Stacey Thompson**

Equity & Access Members Present:

Chairperson Thompson, Ms. Doherty and  
Mr. Lay

School Department Personnel Present:

Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement  
Officer

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Chairperson Thompson called the meeting to order at 6:20 p.m. The purpose of the meeting is review and discuss the following agenda item:

1. Update on Communication and Outreach to Families of Linguistically Diverse Backgrounds

Chairperson Thompson asked Ms. Phillips to address the Subcommittee.

Ms. Phillips stated that language access is a series of language-based services which enables individuals who have limited English proficiency to be able to receive the same level of communication and access to opportunities as Native-English speakers. She stated that this includes services such as translation, interpretation, staff professional development, and the implementation of communications tools. She stated that the goal of language access planning is to ensure that our English learner students and families have their communications needs met when it comes to the educational services of the Lowell Public Schools. She described expanded resources that are being offer such as:

- Electronic Resources (reduces the need for translators)
- EZ - IEP
- Translation Apps and software
- Centralized and School-based Bilingual Family Liaisons
- Five (5) Centralized Liaisons supporting District-wide and School-based Family Engagement (Spanish, Portuguese, Khmer, Swahili, and French)
- Two (2) Centralized Bilingual Family Liaisons Supporting Enrollment Process for the Family Resource Center
- Two (2) Centralized Family Liaisons supporting the Special Education Department
- School-based Bilingual Family Liaisons at each Renaissance School
- Training

- Certification options for Bilingual Family Liaisons and Bilingual Staff through the UMASS Amherst Translation Center

Ms. Phillips stated that the district is focusing on areas for strengthening two-way communication, communication of the registration process, college and career pathways (PreK-12), in-school opportunities, academic progress of student(s), advanced coursework, special programs, interventions and remediation, out of school options and opportunities, athletics, interscholastic clubs, community programs, and school break and summer programs. She stated that it is imperative to let families know what's important to the district, as well as hearing from families on how we can improve our services

Ms. Doherty asked if we provide translators when students go through the IEP process or do our own staff do it.

Ms. Phillips stated that we do both. She stated that we have a Portuguese speaking liaison from Brazil which is very helpful and we also go through a contractor. She stated that we also plan to follow up to see how the experience was.

Mr. Lay asked how we use the language service in our schools. He asked if the Committee could get a list of translation services that include how we provide them.

Ms. Phillips stated yes.

Mr. Lay asked if we are comfortable with all the services we are providing now.

Ms. Phillips stated that the tools are different from the relationship. She stated that we need more bilingual staff. She stated that bilingual step tools are important so anyone can step into our schools.

Ms. Thompson stated that she thinks it's important to have cultural staff and asked about the information provided in the report regarding one (1) way communication and if parents are able to see that online.

Ms. Phillips stated that she will have to look into that because she's unsure.

Ms. Thompson asked if the district is looking at getting others certified for bilingual services.


Ms. Phillips stated yes.

Ms. Thompson asked if we can do a video for the low incidence languages so they don't have to come in person.

Ms. Phillips stated we are recording one (1) in Khmer. She stated that our apps are also being utilized for translation in the low incidence languages.

**Ms. Doherty made a motion to adjourn at 6:52p.m.; seconded by Mr. Lay. 3 yeas APPROVED**

Respectfully submitted,

  
Ms. Phillips, Chief Equity & Engagement  
Officer for Dr. Joel Boyd, Superintendent  
and Secretary, Lowell School Committee

LP/mes